

Sutton Benger Parish Council

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DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SUTTON BENDER PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8th APRIL 2026 AT SUTTON BENDER VILLAGE HALL COMMENCING AT 7:15 PM

Present: Councillors Jan Campbell, Adam Carwardine (Chair), Iain Craig, Ruth Gaunt, Claire Mansfield, Cllr Thomson (Vice-Chair), Cllr Watchman plus Sue Hart (Parish Clerk)

There were two members of the public present.

245.25	<p>Apologies for absence To note and agree any apologies received from Parish Council members. It was noted that Wiltshire Councillor Howard Greenman had submitted his apologies.</p>
246.25	<p>Declarations of Interest: In accordance with S31 of the Localism Act 2011 and the Parish Council's adopted Standing Orders – To receive declarations of any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in respect of any item contained in this Agenda.</p> <p>Cllr Carwardine declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in the tree consent application for 7 Manor Farm Drive, stayed in the room but did not speak or vote on the application.</p> <p>On a proposal from Cllr Carwardine and carried unanimously, It was Resolved to grant a standing dispensation to Cllr Campbell to represent the village school at Parish Council meetings in accordance with S33 of the Localism Act 2011. Cllr Campbell signed a Dispensation Request Form.</p> <p>On a proposal from Cllr Carwardine and carried unanimously, It was Resolved to grant a standing dispensation to Cllr Mansfield to represent the village hall at Parish Council meetings in accordance with S33 of the Localism Act 2011. Cllr Mansfield signed a Dispensation Request Form.</p>
247.25	<p>Public Forum Session Two villagers who had purchased the Bell House Hotel wished to speak regarding the planning applications for the Bell House Hotel. With councillors' agreement the Chair proposed they did so just before the agenda item was raised.</p>
248.25	<p>Minutes – To approve minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th March 2026 Revised draft minutes had been circulated to councillors. The Clerk noted that she had revised the minutes to record that Cllr Watchman had joined the meeting before Minute 227.25 Planning.</p> <p>On a proposal from Cllr Carwardine and carried unanimously, It was Resolved to accept the revised minutes as a true record, and they were signed by the Chair.</p>
249.25	<p>Planning Applications The purchasers of the Bell House Hotel were asked to speak on the application prior to it being considered by councillors. They noted that they had plans to reopen the building as a pub and café with four Airbnb rooms above the bar. The single storey part of the building would be demolished. They were also Building Regs submitted for a Change of Use, but this was likely to be the subject of a separate planning application in about a year's time so those works would not be connected to or impact the reopening of the bar and café which they were hoping would be later in the summer. They said that they had had an incident in the car park which they had reported to the police. The police have suggested putting a barrier across the parking area otherwise they are not able to intervene.</p> <p>New Applications for Consideration: PL/2026/01841 The Bell House Hotel, Sutton Benger – Proposed internal & external alterations to hotel to include demolition of single storey toilets and associated works (Deadline for comments: 30Apr26) On a proposal from Cllr Gaunt and carried unanimously, It was Resolved to Support this application.</p>

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	<p>PL/2026/02025 The Bell House Hotel, Sutton Benger (Listed Building Consent) – Proposed internal & external alterations to hotel to include demolition of single storey toilets and associated works (Deadline for comments: 30Apr26) On a proposal from Cllr Gaunt and carried unanimously, It was Resolved to Support this application.</p> <p>PL/2026/02241 – 7 Manor Farm Drive - Notification of proposed works to trees in a conservation area. This application had not been received in time to go on the agenda but would expire before May meeting. Councillors noted that they had no objection.</p> <p>Planning Updates Appeals and Enforcement Updates: The Clerk said that BR/2026/07175 The Bell House Hotel, Sutton Benger Building Control Application had been submitted for Material Change of Use from pub to Supported Living flats for Adults with Learning Disabilities and internal and external alterations to create café and kitchen (works to incorporate material alterations to structure, controlled services, fittings and thermal elements). However, as the owner said this is now under review and likely to be submitted as a full planning application councillors did not discuss this matter.</p> <p>Existing Enforcement Orders: ENF/2025/01050 Land at Seagry Hill – Update on SBPC request for enforcement action at ‘Walkers Rest’ regarding building non-conformance to original application. Status: No update. ENF/2026/00160 Frampton Farm Travellers’ Site – Update on current number of pitches. Enforcement has confirmed only 15 pitches have authorisation. Status: No update.</p> <p>Enforcement Breaches – for Resolution: 19/10310/VAR Mount Pleasant Farm, Draycot Cerne – Variation of conditions 2 and 8 of 19/01110/FUL (Change of use of existing agricultural barn to business / storage (B1 / B8 use), alterations to existing access and associated works) Permission granted 22 January 2020 On a proposal from Cllr Gaunt seconded by Cllr Carwardine, It was Resolved to submit a planning control breach to the Local Authority due to the site noted as now advertising and being used for trading.</p> <p>20/09319/FUL Land near Chippenham Gateway, South of M4 Junction 17, Draycot Cerne – Temporary site compound and widen an existing access on the B4122. Permission granted 18 December 2020. On a proposal from Cllr Gaunt seconded by Cllr Carwardine, It was Resolved to submit a planning control breach to the Local Authority due to the permission having expired on 31 December 2022 and the site still being used by lorries and not restored to its former condition.</p> <p>Wiltshire Council Decisions: PL/2026/00818 – Elmete, High Street - Notification of proposed works to trees in a conservation area. (Wiltshire Council Decision: No Objection) PL/2023/10642 – Land East of Church View - Approval of reserved matters following Outline approved under appeal ref APP/Y3940/W/22/3292118 for erection of 19 dwellings and associated infrastructure (details of appearance, scale, layout & landscaping) (Wiltshire Council Decision: Approve with Conditions)</p>									
250.25	<p>Finance - Report distributed to councillors a) To note transactions since last report at Parish Council meeting on 11 March 26</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 1834 1422 2002"> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1834 496 1901">30 Mar 26</td> <td data-bbox="496 1834 1214 1901">Community No.1 Account (Current) Previously reported as £2,575.06)</td> <td data-bbox="1214 1834 1422 1901">£3,525.06</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="320 1901 496 1935">30 Mar 26</td> <td data-bbox="496 1901 1214 1935">Community Instant Access Account (Deposit)</td> <td data-bbox="1214 1901 1422 1935">£50,628.17</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" data-bbox="320 1935 1214 2002">Bank balances on Monday 9 Feb 26 (Previously reported as £53,203.33)</td> <td data-bbox="1214 1935 1422 2002">£54,153.13</td> </tr> </table> <p>NOTE: These figures were incorrectly stated in the Mar26 Financial Report (Minute 229.25)</p>	30 Mar 26	Community No.1 Account (Current) Previously reported as £2,575.06)	£3,525.06	30 Mar 26	Community Instant Access Account (Deposit)	£50,628.17	Bank balances on Monday 9 Feb 26 (Previously reported as £53,203.33)		£54,153.13
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Payments from Current Account during last month (not including officer's payments):

		Amount	Minute
2 Mar	CIL 9 Payment: 25-089 JMA Groundworks Allotment shelter	£950.00	211.25
17 Mar	Lloyds Bank Service charge	£4.25	250.25
19 Mar	Section 106: 25-090 Marcus Anstie Windows– Feb26	£90.00	229.25
19 Mar	Village Hall – Hall Hire	£51.00	229.25
19 Mar	CIL 9 Payment: Wiltshire Council Depth Gauge	£329.27	210.25
30Mar	CIL 9, 10, 11 Part Payment: Blue Kite Academy Outdoor Classroom	£8,000.00	211.25

Credits to Current Account:

16 Mar	HMRC 2025-26 VAT Refund	£2,383.45
30 Mar	Deposit (0605-1779) to Current (0034-4200)	£6,000.00

Credits to Deposit Account:

27 Feb	Lloyds Bank – Interest	£20.75
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Transfers Between Accounts:

30 Mar	Deposit (0605-1779) to Current (0034-4200)	£6,000.00
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b) To Resolve on the approval of future payments to be made online:

Online	26-001 WALC/NALC Annual Subscription	£597.78
Online	26-003 AD Grounds and Landscaping – New season	522.32
Online	26-004 Cllr Carwardine Travel exp Wiltshire Council return	16.20
Online	26-005 Cllr Carwardine Chairs allowance - gift	12.99
Online	26-006 Fasthosts .gov.uk Domain renewal (Annual)	54.00
Online	Section 106 Payment: 26-002 Marcus Anstie Windows– Apr 26	£91.00

To note that in accordance with Minute 176.25 resolving to agree up to 6 hours / month overtime claimable by the Clerk between Nov – Apr 26, the Clerk has claimed additional hours worked as reported to councillors in the Financial Report.

Note: Copies of invoices 26-001 to 25-006 attached plus Payroll records forwarded to Finance Councillors

Councillors also resolved to approve a payment to Turtle Engineering for £54.97 including VAT for replacement defibrillator pads – payment to be made at time of order.

On a proposal from Cllr Campbell and approved unanimously, **It was Resolved** to approve the future payments to be made online.

c) To approve the FY 2025/26 End of Year Financial Report and Bank Reconciliation

31 Mar 26	Community No.1 Account (Current)	£1,595.68
31 Mar 26	Community Instant Access Account (Deposit)	£44,648.92
	Bank balances on Tuesday 31 March 26	£46,244.60

On a proposal from Cllr Carwardine and carried unanimously, **It was Resolved** to approve the 2025/26 end of year Financial Report and Bank Reconciliation.

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	<p>d) To approve the April 26 Financial Report</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="320 300 1420 405"> <tr> <td style="width: 15%;">6 Apr 26</td> <td style="width: 65%;">Community No.1 Account (Current)</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: right;">£1,595.68</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6 Apr 26</td> <td>Community Instant Access Account (Deposit)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£44,648.92</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="text-align: right;">Bank balances on Monday 6 April 26</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£46,244.60</td> </tr> </table> <p>Note: Copies of Bank Statements forwarded to Councillors</p> <p>On a proposal from Cllr Craig and carried unanimously, It was Resolved to approve the April 2026 Financial Report.</p> <p>e) To resolve on the end-of year 2025/26 budget and opening budget for FY 2026/27. Copies of the end-of-year 2025/26 budget and opening budget for 2026/27 had been forwarded to councillors and were reviewed by the Clerk. The Clerk noted that there had been no start of year budget for 2025-26 due to the previous clerk's absence but that the bank accounts had been reconciled for 2025-26 and there was one minor discrepancy which she would resubmit when resolved. On a proposal from Cllr Craig and seconded by Cllr Gaunt, It was Resolved to approve the end-of-year 2025/26 budget and opening budget for 2026/27.</p> <p>f) To resolve on a budget for expenses related to the 2026 Annual Parish Meeting Cllr Carwardine said that costs would be incurred for hall hire, printed A5 double sided A4 Flyers and a PVC Parish Council Banner (which could be reutilised in future years). He was hoping for sponsors to provide sufficient refreshments but would report to the May Parish Council Meeting if there was likely to be a shortfall requiring any further expenditure. On a proposal from Cllr Watchman and seconded by Cllr Craig, It was Resolved to approve the sum of £350.00 to be allocated to Annual Parish Meeting expenses.</p>	6 Apr 26	Community No.1 Account (Current)	£1,595.68	6 Apr 26	Community Instant Access Account (Deposit)	£44,648.92	Bank balances on Monday 6 April 26		£46,244.60
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251.25	<p>Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 Funds held by the Parish Council - Clerk Copies of the end of 2025-26 Financial Year status of both CIL and Section 106 agreements had been forwarded to councillors including status on the CIL and Section 106 reserves. All outstanding funding which had been allocated to CIL tranches had been paid before the end of the financial year.</p> <p>The Clerk had received the Wiltshire Council's Section 106 Side Agreement for Land at Sutton Lane.</p> <p>On a proposal from Cllr Gaunt seconded by Cllr Campbell, It was Resolved that the Chair and the Clerk should sign the agreement on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Carwardine and Sue Hart signed both copies of the agreement.</p> <p>Cllr Gaunt noted that an extra house had been built at Arms Farm and asked if the Clerk could follow up the implications with the CIL/S106 Team at Wiltshire Council. ACTION: Clerk</p>									
252.25	<p>Chair's Report Cllr Carwardine noted that following the meeting several members of the Parish Council had with the developers of Land off the High Street, Charles Church Developments, on the 12th January, several points had been raised. He had chased them again for feedback but is still waiting for their update.</p>									
253.25	<p>Stanton St Quintin (Chippenham) Recycling Centre Cllr Carwardine updated councillors on his follow up to the site traffic and queuing issues and Cllr Watchman had drafted a press release which had been circulated to councillors. Councillors agreed on submitting this as an expression of the Parish Council's concern and its lack of resolution.</p> <p>The Parish Council had been approached regarding its willingness to participate in a collaborative working group instigated by Purton Parish Council with respect to planned future closures of neighbouring recycling sites in order to provide a collective response to Wiltshire Council with neighbouring Parish Councils. Cllr Carwardine said he would be willing to be the Parish Council's representative.</p>									

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254.25	<p>Clerk's Report and Matters Arising from previous meetings</p> <p>The Clerk reported that as the village's contribution to Great British Spring Clean, there would be a Community Clean Up on Saturday 11 April. The Village Hall was booked until 11:30.</p>
255.25	<p>Councillors' Resignations and Vacancies – Cllr Carwardine</p> <p>(a) Councillors Jeremy Haselton and Shaun Morse had resigned from the Parish Council and Notices of Vacancies were posted on Friday 27 March 26.</p> <p>(b) Cllr Daniel Errington had also resigned from the Parish Council and Wiltshire Council has been informed.</p> <p>(c) The Parish Council will be able to co-opt two councillors if no applications are received for the first two councillors' resignations by 20th April 26. Wiltshire Council has not yet notified the Clerk of the date for co-option of a third councillor. The Parish Council can have a total of eleven councillors therefore there will now be four vacancies.</p> <p>(d) Councillors' Responsibilities – The current list of councillors' responsibilities had been circulated to councillors following the appointment of two new councillors in recent months plus the three resignations.</p> <p>It was noted that Cllr Craig is in the process of setting up a volunteers' register to supplement councillors' responsibilities. The Clerk had also drafted a new Volunteers' Policy which will be reviewed as part of Governance at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council next month.</p> <p>Two of the councillors who had resigned have expressed their willingness to continue with part of their previous responsibilities on a volunteer basis: Daniel Errington on matters relating to the Parish Steward, and Jeremy Haselton on matters relating to grounds maintenance. This theme will be developed at the Annual Parish Meeting to encourage more villagers to volunteer. Village Organisations have been asked to participate in making suggestions for possible volunteering opportunities.</p> <p>The Chair noted that more support will be needed by Parish Council-associated volunteers if not councillors for areas including flooding, having a flood warden, and the Community Emergency Plan.</p> <p>Cllr Craig expressed his willingness to take on responsibility for Volunteers.</p> <p>Cllr Gaunt noted that whilst she was Planning Lead it was the responsibility of all councillors to take an active part in reviewing and providing input to planning applications. ACTION: All councillors.</p> <p>She also said that providing detailed feedback to Wiltshire Council required specialised expertise. The Clerk agreed to work with Cllr Gaunt in order to frame feedback, particularly for objections to planning applications, in the detail that was required to relate objections to the most current Local Plan and the local Neighbourhood Development Plan. ACTION: Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Carwardine said he would come up with a list of the current vacancies and what volunteers could do to support this.</p>
256.25	<p>Annual Parish Meeting – Cllr Carwardine / Cllr Watchman</p> <p>Cllr Carwardine updated councillors on the current status of plans for the Annual Parish Meeting and the task list of individual actions by councillors. More organisations are still to respond before it would be clear what space at the event would be available for any other organisations external to the village.</p>

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	<p>It was agreed that in view of The Bobby Van Trust's interest they should be given the opportunity to participate. ACTION: Cllr Carwardine to invite The Bobby Van Trust.</p>
257.25	<p>Parish Council Website – Cllr Watchman Cllr Watchman said that she had now spec'd out the requirements for a new website and will now come up with two more possible providers.</p> <p>Community Engagement Update: Cllr Watchman was now active on Facebook and the previous Admins had been removed. She had also started to use the new logo. She was starting to see an increase in numbers and will draw readers' attention to it in the Parish News. Communications already shared included the Stanton recycling issue, defib training and the Community Clean up.</p> <p>She asked if she could have access to the website. ACTION: Cllr Carwardine to follow up.</p> <p>She was also keen to set up an Instagram account.</p>
258.25	<p>Flood Warden update / Community Emergency Plan – Cllr Carwardine Cllr Campbell's update on her reading of the Community Emergency Plan was that it was too big and not specific enough. She said she would look into other councils' versions of Community Emergency Plans that were more streamlined but would not be able to do so until the June Parish Council meeting. ACTION: Cllr Campbell to follow up.</p> <p>Cllr Carwardine noted that ex-Cllr Morse had attended the Village Hall meeting when the committee had posed questions regarding a Community Hub which have not yet been answered. He said he would be willing to attend a VHC meeting to follow these up. Cllr Mansfield said would check if and when he should attend. ACTION: Cllr Mansfield / Cllr Carwardine.</p> <p>Cllr Carwardine noted that there was a need for a flood warden. A Parish Council flooding representative would need to be someone who can attend the Operational Flood Group North meetings to address Wiltshire Councillor Greenman's point that it is a valuable source of support as long as parish representatives attend and keep updated.</p>
259.25	<p>Traffic Calming / LHFIG / Speed Indicator Device Cllr Carwardine said that the request for an extension of 30 mph speed limit east of Sutton Benger was considered at the LHFIG meeting on 31st March.</p> <p>The High Street traffic survey has now been carried out but he had not yet received the results.</p> <p>His SID report for March 2026 noted that the east end of the village continued to be a black spot with a maximum speed of 104 mph from the Christian Malford direction and some 221 vehicles exceeding 50 mph and 76 vehicles exceeding 60 mph. Even if the SID is picking up vehicles outside the 30 mph limit the national speed limit is still being exceeded.</p>
260.25	<p>Village Updates</p> <p>a) Village Hall – Cllr Mansfield said that due to rising prices and the village hall being unable to proceed until the Section 106 agreement had been finalised, the Village Hall will need all the Section 106 money for the Covered Open Space project so there would be no money spare for an outdoor gym or works to the changing room. The following Monday there would be Defibrillator training evening at the hall, and on 17th April a Big Band Night fund raiser.</p> <p>b) Village School – Cllr Campbell said that the temporary head teacher has now been permanently appointed. The school were delighted with the CIL funds for an outdoor classroom and were hoping to start in June. She said this was an excellent way of providing support to young parents who don't get involved and benefit from community funding elsewhere in village. She had requested that the structure should note the contribution from the Parish Council.</p>

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261.25	Wiltshire Council - Wiltshire Councillor Greenman was unable to attend.
262.25	Correspondence sent / received. The Clerk had received an e-mail and video of Stanton St Quintin recycling centre queueing problems (as covered by agenda item above)
264.25	Exchange of information and Any Items for Consideration at Next Meeting Cllr Watchman said she had made some notes of her attendance at the Community Parish Forum but asked whether Cllr Thomson and the Clerk had also made notes so that she could summarise the main points. ACTION: Cllr Thomson and Clerk to check their notes. Cllr Thomson said he was in the process of updating the Standing Orders for review at the May PC meeting.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be the **Annual Meeting of the Parish Council** to be held on **Wednesday 13th May 2026 at 7:15 pm at Sutton Benger Village Hall, Chestnut Road.**

MEETING CLOSED AT 21:55